

BUZZ ON BUSINESS

Entergy expands Internet services

Entergy Louisiana customers may now view power outage information and conduct transactions related to their bills online after the company expanded its Internet offerings.

"Our customers have asked for these key services," Jim Pesnell, region customer service manager, said in a news release. "We are pleased that they can access their Entergy Louisiana account and get information while at home or anywhere they have online access."

Outage information, which may be viewed by state, county or parish or by entering an address, is updated every 30 minutes.

Online account services allow customers to view and pay their bill, see their billing and payment history and sign up to have their bill paid automatically.

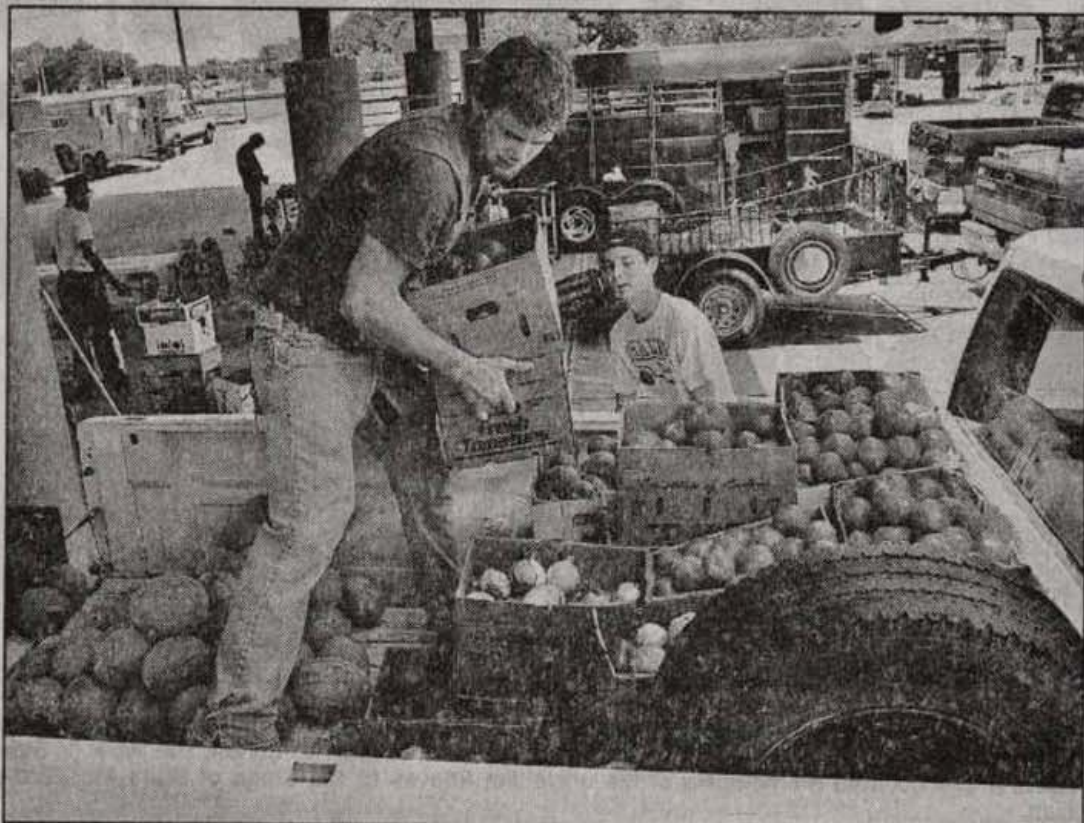
Coleman launches new Web site

U.L. Coleman Companies has launched its redesigned Web site, www.ulcoleman.com, offering real estate resources for those looking for apartment homes in the Shreveport-Bossier City area.

The site also has information about commercial property for sale or lease, property or asset management, company credentials and capabilities and local community information, according to a news release. Information about real estate market trends also is available on the site in the Commercial Real Estate Quarterly Review Newsletter.

— From Staff Reports

La. officials pushing for bigger Nucor project



Sue Ogrocki/AP

Bryan Phelps, left, and Rhett Wood work at the stand of Todd Griffith, load up unsold produce into their pickup at the farmers market in Edmond, Okla., recently. Consumer spending is down and gas prices are up. That's bad math for the scores of destination retailers across the country that want customers to fill up the tank for a gas-guzzling day of retail therapy.

Fuel price hikes squeeze farmers at local markets

By Eileen AJ Connelly
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Franca Tantillo puts rising fuel prices in the same category as the springtime hail storm that wiped out part of her strawberry crop. Both cut into the profit she can make at the farmers' markets she sells at in New York City, about 135 miles south of her farm.

Like Tantillo, market farmers nationwide face exponentially rising costs for fuel, fertilizer

and animal feed, and they sometimes a collection of vendors gathered in a city park or parking lot, such markets typically feature seasonal produce, meats and handcrafted cheeses sold by small farmers directly to consumers. The markets often add baked goods and other prepared foods for sale.

The size varies from the half dozen who sell at the St. George Greenmarket on Staten Island, New York City's smallest borough, to the nearly 200 that line the streets surrounding

they're going to be figuring out the dollars and cents of all of it," said Erin Barnett, director of Local Harvest, which operates a Web site with a national directory of local food programs.

But some are concerned they won't be able to compete with the large grocery chains, said Dave Stockdale, executive director of the Center for Urban Education about Sustainable Agriculture, which runs the Ferry Plaza Farmers Market in San Francisco.